

The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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No Room in the Inn!

By D. L. Moody

"And they laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn."—Luke 2:7.

The human heart is very much like that inn at Bethlehem—no room for Christ. Every true child of God for four thousand years had been looking out into the mist of the future, and had been listening to hear the sound of His footfall. Yet the very first thing we hear when he arrives upon earth is that there is no room for Him.

Mark how He might have come, with all the pomp and all the glory of that upper world. It would have been a great condescension for Him to have been born in a palace, rocked in a golden cradle, and fed with a golden spoon, and to have had the angels come down to be His nurses. But He gave up all the glory of that world; He was born of a poor woman, and His cradle was a manger, the lowest position that He could take on earth.

Then, for a moment, just think what He had come for. He had come to bless, not to curse; to lift up, not to cast down; to seek and save that which was lost; to give sight to the blind; to open prison doors and set captives free; to reveal the Father's love; to give rest to the weary; to be a blessing to the whole world—and yet we find there is no room for Him!

In all the thirty-three years He was down here we do not find one place where He was royally received, one place where the officials

came to meet Him or give Him welcome. But we do find that He was buffeted and jeered and mocked and insulted and derided. Nazareth was considered one of the meanest towns in Galilee, and yet even Nazareth did not have room for Jesus Christ.

We speak of this being the age of Christianity; a time of culture and great advancement in intelligence; but where is there a nation today that wants Jesus Christ? If Christ should return to earth, do you know a nation or a people that would tolerate Him? Is there a city in the world that would cast its vote for Him? Not one.

Perhaps someone here from the country is saying, "Oh, the cities all are bad, but the countries would go for Him." I doubt if there is a village or district anywhere that would give one vote in a hundred for the Saviour of the world.

I am sure there wasn't room in (Continued on page 8)



Dear Mrs. Bird lay in her room, weak, but safe and happy, with her sweet baby by her side.

The Birds' Christmas Carol

by Kate Douglas Wiggin

A Classic Christmas Story

I

A Little Snow Bird

It was very early Christmas morning, and in the stillness of the dawn, with the soft snow falling on the housetops, a little child was born in the Bird household.

They had intended to name the baby Lucy, if it were a girl; but they had not expected her on Christmas morning, and a real Christmas baby was not to be lightly named—the whole family agreed in that.

They were consulting about it in the nursery. Mr. Bird said that he had assisted in naming the three boys, and that he should leave this matter entirely to Mrs. Bird; Donald wanted the child called 'Dorothy,' after a pretty, curly-haired girl who sat next to him in school; Paul chose 'Luella,' for Luella was the nurse who had been with him during his whole babyhood, up to the time of his first trousers and the name suggested all sorts of comfortable things. Uncle Jack said that the first girl should always be named for her mother, no matter how hideous the name happened to be.

Grandma said that she would prefer not to take any part in the discussion, and everybody suddenly remembered that Mrs. Bird had thought of naming the baby Lucy, for Grandma herself; and, while it would be indelicate for her to favor that name, it would be against human nature for her to suggest any other, under the circumstances.

Hugh, the 'hitherto baby,' if that is a possible term, sat in one corner and said nothing, but felt, in some mysterious way, that his nose was out of joint, for there was a newer baby now, a possibility he had never taken into consideration; and the 'first girl,' too—a still higher development of treason, which made him actually green with jealousy.

But it was too profound a subject to be settled then and there, on the spot; besides, Mamma had not been asked, and everybody felt it rather absurd, after all, to forestall a decree that was certain to be absolutely wise, just, and perfect.

So Donald took his new velocipede and went out to ride up and down the stone pavement and notch the shins of innocent people as they passed by, while Paul

spun his musical top on the front steps.

But Hugh refused to leave the scene of action. He seated himself on the top stair in the hall, banged his head against the railing a few times, just by way of uncorking the vials of his wrath, and then subsided into gloomy silence, waiting to declare war if more 'first girl babies' were thrust upon a family already surfeited with that unnecessary article.

Meanwhile dear Mrs. Bird lay in her room, weak, but safe and happy, with her sweet girl baby by her side and the heaven of motherhood opening again before her. Nurse was making gruel in the kitchen, and the room was dim and quiet. There was a cheerful open fire in the grate, but though the shutters were closed, the side windows that looked out on the Church of Our Saviour, next door, were a little open.

Suddenly a sound of music poured out into the bright air and drifted into the chamber. It was the boy choir singing Christmas anthems. Higher and higher rose the clear, fresh voices, full of hope and cheer, as children's voices always are. Fuller and fuller grew the burst of melody as one glad strain fell upon another in joyful harmony.

Carol, brothers, carol,
Carol joyfully,
Carol the good tidings,
Carol merrily!
And pray a glad some Christmas
For all your fellow-men:
Carol, brothers, carol,
Christmas Day again.

One verse followed another, always with the same sweet refrain:

And pray a glad some Christmas
(Continued on page 3)

This is a story you will love. Last Christmas we decided that it was just too much fun to read alone, so we read it together at our family celebration. Everyone from Dad on down to the grandchildren listened with bright eyes—bright sometimes with tears and sometimes from laughter. You will find yourself strangely warmed and moved as you laugh with the Ruggies, smile with Uncle Jack, plan with Carol, and the entire Christmas season will become brighter and more blessed. We have found that good things are always better shared. Why don't YOU read it together this Christmas?

—Joanna Rice

The Meaning of CHRISTMAS

by Robert G. Lee, Ph.D., D.D.

Pastor Bellevue Baptist Church, Memphis, Tenn.

"The dayspring from on high hath visited us."—Luke 1:78.

The birth of a little child the Christian world at this season celebrates. Christmas Day is a holy and happy day when we commemorate the coming of God's Son into the world—the incarnation of God by way of the virgin birth. Never too happily can we sing. Never too eagerly can we ring the bells. Never with exaggeration can we express the Christmas benediction. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:14).

With the coming of the "day-spring from on high," morning broke upon the world's darkness—in Bethlehem—while men and women, bruised and bleeding, were in a darkness unlighted by flickering philosophical tapers and sputtering Judaistic lamps.

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given" (Isaiah 9:6). This prediction—most clear in application, most glorious in content, most consolatory in design, most gracious in purpose—points us to the time when God's Son assumed our nature, entering the world in circumstances of deepest humiliation.

With every detail of the Christmas story we are familiar—Herod of Judah, the last of Judah's kings—Isreal, breathing her hope of Messiah's advent—Bethlehem, small and white upon its mountain slopes, where heaven put out its brightest star—Cyrenius publish-

ing the order of the Emperor—the star, seen in far away Persia by wise men of the East, accustomed to study the heavens, mounting their camels and journeying westward over the desert to Jerusalem—the angels, the shepherds, the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, the gifts from the wise men of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

What is the meaning—we ask—of Christmas to the world? Christ is a—

I. Manifestation

Though Christmas is the celebration of the advent of Christ into the world by human birth, nobody should believe that Christmas marks the beginning of Christ—because the Son who rested on the bosom and fed at the breast of the virgin Mary for a little while had, before this world was, rested



on the bosom of the Father—before "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). Jesus had glory with God before the world was (John 17:5). Jesus Himself said: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, (Continued on page 2)



Dr. Robert G. Lee

The Meaning of Christmas

(Continued from page 1)

be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

His incarnation was literally an "enfleshment"—God assuming a living, bodily form. The child of Mary was of the Holy Ghost. The power of the Highest overshadowed her. Through the power of the Holy Spirit that body was formed within her—a body that partook of sin of neither man nor woman. And that body was God. "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory" (I Timothy 3:16). "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh" (Romans 8:3).

The Apostle Peter speaks of Christ who "hath once suffered for sins . . . and being put to death in the flesh" (I Peter 3:18). God's "enfleshment" in Christ means that the pre-existent Christ was embodied in human flesh, demonstrated in human life, exemplified in human action, crystallized in human form. That child Jesus was the Saviour in miniature—in whom, without restriction of essence or suppression of functions, dwelt "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Colossians 2:9).

Christ was God manifest in the flesh—and His every muscle was a pulley divinely swung, His every nerve divine handwriting, His every bone divine sculpture. Christ who shares that plurality of deity expressed in the story of creation was "made flesh," "made of a woman."

Christmas means a—

II. Manger

Coldly the world, which later cruelly thrust Jesus out on the point of a spear, received Jesus on a pallet of manger straw. Messiah's birth chamber was a stable—not a palace, not a human habitation.

What abasement! How wonderful for us that the Lord of glory was so humbled and abased for us—the vile and sinful progeny of Adam. Thinking of Christ stripping Himself of His robes and roles of glory, Flavel said: "If the sun had been turned into a wondering atom, if the most glorious angel in heaven had changed into a fly, it had been nothing to the abasement of the Lord of Glory."

Born as the very poorest, are born, without attendants, He was He through whom God worked and works sublimities without display. Listen at the manger! You will hear the voices of heaven's singers. Look upon the manger! You will see the Christ who came down from the heights of deity to the depths of humanity, down from heaven's honors to earth's humiliation, down from heaven's corona-

tions to earth's curses, down from heaven's delights to earth's defamations, down from the glory place to the gory place, down from heaven's riches to earth's poverty. At the manger, we understand the apostle's words: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Corinthians 8:9).

Christmas means a—

III. Marking

The lowly birthplace of Jesus was marked by a star. "When they heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy" (Matthew 2:9-10).

That star of marking the house to which the wise men from the East came testifies that the fullness of time had come, that the prophecies were accomplished, that He who had a name "as ointment poured forth" had come with a coming that stirred earth and heaven, the sea and the dry land. "For no other child did the heavens assume a new star. For no other child did wise men come from the East 'to worship him' (Matthew 2:2). For no other child did angels descend from glory. For no other child did heaven and earth bear witness—being marked by prophecy and a star.

But I mean something else by the marking. What mean I? I mean that this Christ, coming into the world by virgin womb, and small enough to be held in a woman's two hands and weak enough to feed at a woman's breast, cradled in a manger, has Christianized the calendar of the world. This Jesus whom neither calendars nor clocks nor contemporary historians took note of, has bent the date lines of all nations around his lowly cradle. Today, as through all the days of all the years, the world over, the dates on newspapers printed, the dates on checks drawn, the dates on deeds recorded, the dates on money coined or spent, the dates on cornerstones placed, the dates on monuments erected, the dates on documents filed, the dates on letters written do testify. Jesus bent the date lines of all the nations around his manger cradle. The Greeks tried to date time from their Olympiads. The Romans tried to date time from the founding of their imperial city. Justinian tried to date time from the tax levies he made. LaPlace tried to date time from conjunctions of certain planets. The French Revolutionists tried to date time from the year one of their revolution. And all failed—miserably, woefully. But what the Jews could not do, what the Greeks could not do, what the Romans could not do, what the French could not do in the matter of dating time, Jesus did—gloriously did. Before He came, the ages awaited Him. Since

He came, the ages rise out of Him. Christmas means—

IV. Music

"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them" (Luke 2:20).

As the sun went down in the western sea that day, the stars came out, and the Messiah's star shone bright. As the Temple shepherds watched their flocks by night, in the midst of the starlit silence appeared a glory—and a voice. "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:8-11).

The shepherds, filled with awe at the shining presence and the wondrous words, did not speak. Moving not, they gazed. And then suddenly, as they looked, the single messenger became a choir—and the night echoed with divinest music. "And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds" (Luke 2:16-18).

As there was music long ago when, "upon the midnight clear," came "that glorious song of old," so still at Christmas there is music.

Still thro' the cloven skies they come;

With peaceful wings unfurled, And still their heavenly music floats

O'er all the weary world: Above its sad and lonely plains

They bend on hovering wing, And ever o'er its Babel sounds

The blessed angels sing.

—EDMUND H. SEARS

Let us, listening to the Christmas music, vocal and instrumental, remember that the Christian life is music in harmony with the will of God. Let us never forget that the centuries become, as it were, a mighty choir lifting their increasing hallelujahs to Christ's name. Higher and ever higher rises their sublime refrain.

But, with all the Christmas joy, the Christmas greetings, the Christmas merrymaking, and though many now rejoice because the true Light shineth, Christmas, for some, means—

V. Mourning

Related tragically are these verses: "When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him."

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, in Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not" (Matthew 2:3, 16-18).

So, though not for the same cause, do we find amid the glad ones whom we greet at Christmas, the sad ones. There are those who rejoice. There are those who weep. Some mourn the loss of loved ones. While some laugh beneath the mistletoe, some grieve beside coffins or over graves. While some faces are as bright as fires aglow on home hearthstones, some faces are shadowed with intangible gloom. While some rejoice and are grateful for abounding health, some pine mournfully because of wasted, disease-smitten bodies.

And some have not joy because they have not the righteousness which Christ, as Saviour, first imputes and then imparts. And some have not joyful peace because they know not the peace which Jesus, who was born to save His people from their sins, makes and then bestows. Some have not joy

HEY!

You Can Still --

1. Give for Tax Deductions Out of 1954 Income
2. Give Subscriptions With Christmas Bonus Money or Cash Gifts Received at Christmas
3. See That Friends Get 21 Prayer Articles to Be Published in 1955
4. Send Subscriptions—3 Subscriptions for \$5, or 25 or More Subscriptions at \$1.50 Each Per Year

By the Editor

Most subscribers will receive THE SWORD OF THE LORD nearly a week before the new year. That means you still have time to send subscriptions as gifts for Jesus' sake, and deduct the gift from taxable income for 1954. The government allows up to thirty per cent in gifts to churches and to accredited nonprofit, Christian institutions. So, not counting your own renewal, or gifts to relatives, you may send subscriptions as a missionary project, or you may send gifts to the Sword of the Lord Missionary and Minister Subscription Fund, and deduct the gift from taxable income. Hurry and write your check or send your money order before January 1!

You may still send subscriptions with your Christmas bonus or with gifts of cash—which you receive at Christmas. Wouldn't that be a lovely way to honor the Lord with some of your Christmas blessings?

You may still see that friends, neighbors, pastors, ministerial students, new converts, get the twenty-one articles on prayer from America's best-selling book on the subject, *Prayer—Asking and Receiving*, to be published in 1955.

You may still send subscriptions at the bargain rates. You may send your own renewal three years for \$5. You may send three 1-year subscriptions for \$5. Or you may send twenty-five or more subscriptions at the rock-bottom rate of \$1.50 per year.

(Canadian and foreign subscriptions require fifty cents more per year because of postage we pay.)

Don't forget this work of God at Christmas time. Let us share in your Christmas joy. We hope you will share with us in the blessed privilege of getting out the Gospel. So, all of us will rejoice together!

Rush your subscriptions to THE SWORD OF THE LORD, Wheaton, Illinois.

P. S. Somebody you forgot to get a Christmas present for? I'll tell you how to make it up in a

because they have not learned in the light of the "dayspring from on high" their sinfulness—and have not returned to him, for salvation. Some find Christmas a time of mourning because they have no calm in their conscience. The heavenly wind has not blown upon them amid life's fretful fevers. So many miss the joy because they set not their feet in the path of the just, which "shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Yes, Christmas for many means mourning.

Moreover, Christmas means—

VI. Meeting

In the birth of Jesus, heaven and earth meet. Coleridge, speaking of philosophy, said: "In wonder all philosophy began, in wonder all philosophy ends, and admiration fills up the interspace." Thinking of Jesus' natal night, of Bethlehem, of the angels, of the inn in which there was no room for the Prince of glory, of the cattle stall in which He was born, of the fact that He was God held in a woman's arms, of those who "wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds" (Luke 2:18), we say, in the words of Shakespeare:

"O wonderful, wonderful, and most wonderful,
And yet again wonderful."

Heaven and earth meet. Shepherds served and angels sang. We read of "shepherds abiding in the fields," "the angel of the Lord," and "a multitude of heavenly hosts." The angels went back to heaven. The shepherds went to Bethlehem. Heaven and earth were in touch, and heaven took the

(Continued on page 8)

beautiful and satisfactory way. Get a nice greeting card and say, "As my Christmas gift to you I have just subscribed for THE SWORD OF THE LORD. You will be getting this Christian magazine weekly, beginning in about three weeks. It comes with all my good wishes for a happy Christmas and for a whole year of blessing." Get the gift card off to them at once and then send us the subscription at once. Thus, easily and quickly you have honored someone that you want to honor and have honored the Lord also.

Can You Help Our Missionary and Minister Subscription Fund?

Yesterday we received four letters in one mail that rejoiced the editor's heart. Someone has paid for subscriptions to a group of Methodist preachers. These four letters were from Methodist pastors who were thanking God for THE SWORD OF THE LORD. One pastor said he had received one issue and declared that it was not only one of the best, but the very best Christian paper published. He had started to send his subscription when a letter came saying that someone had subscribed for him.

Another Methodist pastor rejoiced because he has two television programs weekly and many demands for sermons and addresses and he was so glad to find a Gospel-preaching paper full of sermons, illustrations, Bible help, for a soul-winning preacher. Doubtless he will get many a suggestion and much inspiration from THE SWORD OF THE LORD. He wrote with earnest gratitude.

Another Methodist preacher who believes in all of the old-time fundamentals of the faith, wrote to thank God for a paper standing for those great truths he loves and defends.

The fourth letter was from a retired Methodist preacher. He already receives THE SWORD OF THE LORD and is paid up until 1956, and is rejoicing continually in the blessing of THE SWORD.

Men of God like those mentioned above need THE SWORD OF THE LORD. When they get acquainted with it, they renew their own subscriptions. But thousands of such ministers should have someone send them THE SWORD OF THE LORD so they can see what a blessing it will be to their hearts and ministries.

We are continually overwhelmed at the need for THE SWORD OF THE LORD. We cannot send subscriptions to all the ministerial students, all the foreign missionaries, all the retired preachers, all the Christian workers in foreign countries, who want the paper, and would be blessed by it, without your help.

The fact that some 39,000 preachers now get THE SWORD OF THE LORD (isn't that amazing!) shows how valuable THE SWORD OF THE LORD is to preachers, to a missionary, or any Christian worker. Will you help us send THE SWORD OF THE LORD to every needy one, but who cannot pay for it? Will you help us to introduce it to ministerial students all over America? Will you help us to save modernist preachers by giving them a chance to read THE SWORD OF THE LORD?

We need thousands of dollars for our Missionary and Minister Subscription Fund. I personally am giving to this fund as sacrificially as I can. I believe that a subscription given to a preacher is more likely to do more good for the cause of the oldtime re-

(Continued on page 5)



AMERICA'S OUTSTANDING REVIVAL WEEKLY

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A Blessed Christmas...



from all of us
to all of you!



BUILDING 1 (above):

Seated: Fairy Shappard, Laura Jones, Grace MacMullen, Neva Main, Dorothea Wood, Shirley McClain

First Row Standing: Lola Vradenburgh, Rose Courtright, Mary Hackman, Merritt Tait, Violet Talmage, Roy Tunstall, William Voss, Lois Leuthold, Jo Williams, Gerrie Wright

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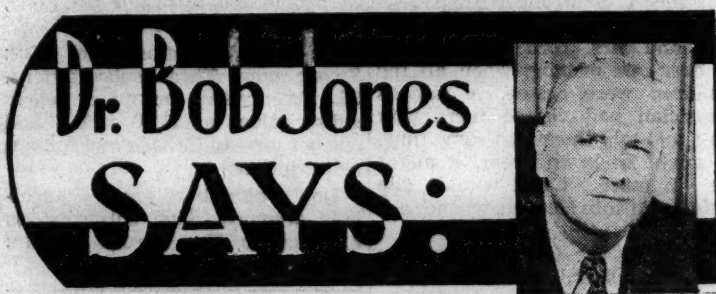
BUILDING 2 (right):

Seated: Diana Davidson, Margaret Pennock, Dr. Rice, Mrs. Rice, Joanna Rice, Dorothy Reichel

Standing: Charles Vradenburgh, Viola Walden, Charles Himes, Donald Sandberg, Jessie Sandberg, Carol Marsh, Ruth Fliehler

Not Pictured: David Frost, Martha Hurst, Gloria Huson, Burton Jones, Bud Kroeker, Ann MacLeod, Ralph McCormick, Willard Michael, Teena Mohlis, Eva Niles, Polly Pickering, Mary Lee Platz, Hugh Pyle, Joy Rice, Bob Roush, Jr., Bonnie Schlutow, Lorraine Simon, Patsy Sprague, Robert Sumner, Shirley Sutton, Ruth Tunstall, Lois Vanderpool, Iva Weidner

THE SWORD FAMILY



I quote statements from students who could never have attended Bob Jones University if it had not been for our work loan scholarships. Note these statements: "I am so thankful for attending a school where Christ has the pre-eminent place in all things." "I have learned the greatest ability is dependability." "I have learned that the best way to find the will of God for tomorrow is to do what He wants me to do today." "I have learned to go as far as I can on the right road—then I can go further." "I have learned that God will not do for me what He has given me strength to do for myself."

There are many wonderful young people who have been able to at-

tend Bob Jones University and are now out in the world living useful Christian lives and winning souls to Jesus Christ who could never have attended this Christian institution if it had not been for the contributions that you friends have made to the work/loan scholarship fund.

Now, remember, one-third of whatever amount of money you send, unless it is definitely earmarked for a specific purpose, goes into the Student Loan Endowment Fund to help students get a Christian education. One-third is set aside for the spread of the Gospel to the ends of the earth. One-third is put into the building fund to erect more buildings to house more students.

We thank you for all you have done in the past, and we are asking you to continue investing some of the money the Lord has given you in the work of Bob Jones University.

You who have never sent a contribution, won't you during this Christmas season send a contribution? Make the amount as large as possible, but if you cannot send a large amount, do not hesitate to send a small amount. Whatever you send will be appreciated and will be used carefully and prayerfully so as to do the most good possible. Please keep praying for us. Thank you, and God bless you.

BOB JONES, FOUNDER
BOB JONES UNIVERSITY
GREENVILLE, S. C.

(Advertisement)

The Bird's Christmas Carol

(Continued from page 1)

For all your fellow-men:
Carol, brothers, carol,
Christmas Day again.

Mrs. Bird thought, as the music floated in upon her gentle sleep, that she had slipped into Heaven with her new baby, and that the angels were bidding them welcome. But the tiny bundle by her side stirred a little, and though it was scarcely more than the ruffling of a feather, she awoke; for the mother-ear is so close to the heart that it can hear the faintest whisper of a child.

She opened her eyes and drew the baby closer. It looked like a rose dipped in milk, she thought, this pink and white blossom of girlhood, or like a pink cherub, with its halo of pale yellow hair, finer than floss silk.

Carol, brothers, carol,
Carol joyfully,
Carol the good tidings,
Carol merrily.

The voices were brimming over with joy.

"Why, my baby," whispered Mrs. Bird in soft surprise, "I had forgotten what day it was. You are a little Christmas child, and we will name you 'Carol'—mother's Christmas Carol!"

"What!" said Mr. Bird, coming in softly and closing the door behind him.

"Why, Donald, don't you think 'Carol' is a sweet name for a Christmas baby? It came to me just a moment ago in the singing, as I was lying here half asleep and half awake."

"I think it is a charming name, dear heart, and sounds just like you, and I hope that, being a girl, this baby has some chance of being as lovely as her mother"—at which speech from the baby's papa, Mrs. Bird, though she was as weak and tired as she could be, blushed with happiness.

And so Carol came by her name.

Perhaps because she was born in holiday time, Carol was a very happy baby. Of course, she was too tiny to understand the joy of Christmas-tide, but people say there is everything in a good beginning, and she may have breathed in unconsciously the fragrance of evergreens and holiday dinners; while the peals of sleigh-bells and the laughter of happy children may have fallen upon her baby ears and wakened in them a glad surprise at the merry world she had come to live in.

Her cheeks and lips were as red as holly-berries; her hair was for all the world the color of a Christmas candle-flame; her eyes were bright as stars; her laugh like a chime of Christmas bells, and her tiny hands forever outstretched in giving.

Such a generous little creature you never saw! A spoonful of bread and milk had always to be taken by Mamma or nurse before Carol could enjoy her supper; whatever bit of cake or candy found its way into her pretty fingers was straightway broken in half to be shared with Donald, Paul, or Hugh; and when they made believe nibble the morsel with affected enjoyment, she would clap her hands and crow with delight.

"Why does she do it?" asked Donald thoughtfully. "None of us boys ever did."

"I hardly know," said Mamma, catching her darling to her heart, "except that she is a little Christmas child, and so she has a tiny share of the blessed birthday the world ever knew!"

II

Drooping Wings

It was December, ten years later.

Carol has seen nine Christmas

trees lighted on her birthdays, one after another; nine times she had assisted in the holiday festivities of the household, though in her babyhood her share of the gayeties was somewhat limited.

For five years, certainly, she had hidden presents for Mamma (Continued on page 4)

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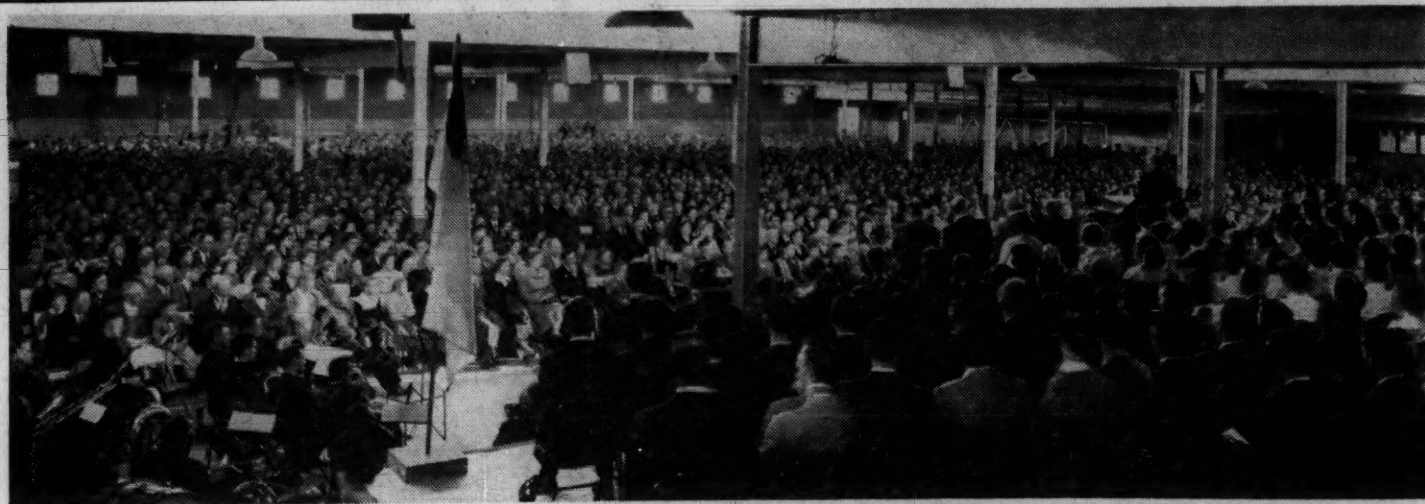
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First Sunday's crowd in Sales Pavilion, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, gathered to hear Evangelist Hyman Appel-man November 1-21. This revival witnessed more than one thousand recorded converts.

WITH THE Evangelists

REPORTS FROM AMERICA'S OUTSTANDING SOUL WINNERS
By the Editor

Forty Alberta churches co-operated with **EVANGELIST HYMAN APPELMAN'S** recent three-weeks' revival. Rev. D. H. Russell, pastor of the Edmonton Free Methodist Church who served as General Chairman of the Edmonton Evangelistic Crusade, announced that the results of the campaign were so satisfactory that the Crusade, which was organized for the sole purpose of promoting the meetings, will continue permanently with the purpose of conducting area-wide revivals in the future. Attendance at the meetings rose steadily throughout the campaign, with crowds ranging from 1,600 to 7,000. And the choir, led by A. Earl Davis, song leader, grew from 108 to 700.

Prominently active during the revival were Alberta's Premier Manning, Lt. Governor J. J. Bowlen, and Edmonton's Mayor Hawrelak.

More than 1,400 people were dealt with after the invitation was given, about 1,100 of whom were converted to Christ. In two invitations some 100 young people dedicated their lives to Christian service. The wife of Premier Manning, an accomplished pianist, accompanied the choir at several services.

DR. HYMAN APPELMAN of Box 8484, Kansas City 14, Missouri, reports that there have been some 9,000 recorded professions of faith in his ministry in 1954. Since a hospital rest after an overstrained body, Dr. Appelman had one week in Evansville, Indiana, one week with the Baptists of Corsicana, Texas, one week in Greenville, Mississippi, one week in the Highland Park Baptist Church, Chattanooga, with Dr. Lee Roberson, and one week in Calvary Baptist Church, New York. Then in Edmonton, Canada, in a united campaign, which is reported above. We rejoice that God is blessing our brother, and ask the prayers of God's people for his ministry.

EVANGELIST FREDERICK P. BILLINGS of Dallas reports a good campaign in October in the Victory Missionary Baptist Church in Indianapolis. Rev. Charles Smith is pastor. Many are reported saved. Pastor Smith says, "Some thirty decisions for Christ and the church were made. These included quite a few adults..." He reports fourteen others coming to accept Christ or for church membership since the campaign closed.

EVANGELIST CLIFF ROBINSON of 1707 Kirby Ave., Chattanooga, Tennessee, was blessed of God in a revival with Winchester Baptist Church, Winchester, Ohio. Pastor Paul M. Robinson writes: "Interest was good through entire meeting; decisions seven of the ten nights." The church hopes to have Brother Robinson again for a revival.

EVANGELIST PETE RIGGS and songleader Bill Weston recently closed a city-wide campaign in Newton, Kansas, with

"200 recorded decisions" reported by Youth for Christ director Willis Stitt. The auditorium seating 1,300 proved too small for the closing three services.

First Baptist Church, Bethany, Oklahoma, had 23 additions in a 12-day meeting led by **Sword of the Lord EVANGELIST J. OSCAR WELLS**—14 by baptism and 9 by letter. This is Mr. Wells' home church. Rev. E. M. Cox is pastor; music was led by Roy N. Coffman.

Pastor Charles H. Betty reports on a 12-day revival at Midland Park Baptist Church, Charleston, South Carolina, with **EVANGELIST BILL COMPTON**, 1709 Loring Street, Decatur, Alabama. The pastor reports 14 professions of faith in Christ, with others joining the church and rededicating their lives.

EVANGELIST EDDIE MARTIN had the unique privilege of having an 8-day revival in the Kentucky State Penitentiary. The services were in the mess hall daily at 12:30. All prison activity was suspended for the entire afternoon so that every inmate would have an opportunity to attend the meetings. The evangelist reports 400 attended daily, with about 650 on two Sundays. He adds: "The men are rough. I preach it as straight as I know how and made the invitation as hard as possible. We rejoice that 76 men stepped out in front of their fellow-prisoners and took their stand for Christ. To do this in the prison is a bold step indeed. Several lifetimers were converted." The Warden attended several services and sat with the men.

The Chaplain at the Kentucky State Penitentiary is Jimmie Longacre, a very influential Christian among the inmates.

Sword of the Lord EVANGELIST J. OSCAR WELLS was recently in a revival with Brailey Union Church, Swanton, Ohio. The pastor, Rev. Donald F. Roop, reports good attendance and 30 conversions were recorded as well as 35 rededications. An 83-year-old man was saved in his home as the evangelist and pastor visited. One Methodist pastor got assurance of salvation. A personal workers class was set up, to be carried on weekly by the pastor.

Our good friend, **EVANGELIST BILL PIPER**, 122 Bradley Blvd., Greenville, South Carolina, witnessed a remarkable demonstration of God's power in a revival at United Baptist Church, Presque Isle, Maine. There were 117 who signed decision cards as first-time conversions, with many other backsliders restored. A good many were baptized the closing night; others wait baptism. Rev. Philip Hughey pastors this splendid church, which co-operated with this editor in a city-wide effort in Presque Isle several years ago.

Rev. Aubrey T. Mitchell of Wilson Avenue Baptist Church, Prichard, Alabama, writes of a fine

The Birds' Christmas Carol

(Continued from page 3)

and Papa in their own bureau drawers, and harbored a number of secrets sufficiently large to burst a baby brain, had it not been for the relief gained by whispering them all to Mamma, at night, when she was in her crib, a proceeding which did not in the least lessen the value of a secret in her innocent mind.

For five years she had heard 'Twas the night before Christmas,' and hung up a scarlet stocking many sizes too large for her, and pinned a sprig of holly on her little white nightgown, to show Santa Claus that she was a 'truly' Christmas child, and dreamed of fur-coated saints and toy-packs and reindeer, and wished everybody a 'Merry Christmas' before it was light in the morning, and lent every one of her new toys to the neighbors' children before noon, and eaten turkey and plum-pudding, and gone to bed at night in a trance of happiness at the day's pleasures.

Donald was away at college now. Paul and Hugh were great manly fellows, taller than their mother. Papa Bird had gray hairs in his whiskers; and Grandma, God bless her, had been four Christmases in Heaven.

But Christmas in the Bird's Nest was scarcely as merry now as it used to be in the bygone years, for the little child, that 'once brought such an added blessing to the day, lay month after month a patient, helpless invalid, in the room where she was born. She had never been very strong in body, and it was with a pang of terror her mother and father noticed, soon after she was five years old,

revival with **DR. PETER RUCKMAN**, with 53 conversions to Christ, 39 came to unite with the church, and 14 rededicated their lives. Many people from other churches in the vicinity attended nightly, and the large auditorium was filled nightly, according to the pastor.

EVANGELIST HUGH F. PYLE of the Sword of the Lord conducted revival services November 22 to December 5 in the Upper Lisle Baptist Church at Upper Lisle, N. Y. Every home in the village was visited with the Gospel. Fifteen were saved and made profession of faith. Others rededicated their lives to Christ. Some children also made profession in a school service. Miles Gelatt is the consecrated pastor of this rural church.

that she began to limp, ever so slightly; to complain too often of weariness, and to nestle close to her mother, saying she 'would rather not go out to play, please.' The illness was slight at first, and hope was always stirring in Mrs. Bird's heart. 'Carol would feel stronger in the summer-time'; or, 'She would be better when she had spent a year in the country'; or, 'She would outgrow it'; or, 'They would try a new physician'; but by and by it came to be all too sure that no physician save One could make Carol strong again, and that no 'summer-time' nor 'country air,' unless it were the everlasting summer-time in a heavenly country, could bring back the little girl to health.

The cheeks and lips that were once as red as holly-berries faded to faint pink; the star-like eyes grew softer, for they often gleamed through tears; and the gay child-laugh, that had been like a chime of Christmas bells, gave place to a smile so lovely, so touching, so tender and patient; that it filled every corner of the house with a gentle radiance that might have come from the face of the Christchild himself.

Love could do nothing; and when we have said that we have said all, for it is stronger than anything else in the whole wide world. Mr. and Mrs. Bird were talking it over one evening when all the children were asleep. A famous physician had visited them that day, and told them that some time, it might be in one year, it might be in more, Carol would slip quietly off into Heaven, whence she came.

'It is no use to close our eyes to it any longer,' said Mr. Bird, as he paced up and down the library floor, 'Carol will never be well again. It almost seems as if I could not bear it when I think of that loveliest child doomed to lie there day after day, and what is still more, to suffer pain that we are helpless to keep away from her. Merry Christmas, indeed; it gets to be the saddest day in the year to me!'—and poor Mr. Bird sank into a chair by the table, and buried his face in his hands to keep his wife from seeing the tears that would come in spite of all his efforts.

'But, Donald, dear,' said sweet Mrs. Bird, with trembling voice, 'Christmas Day may not be so merry with us as it used, but it is very happy, and that is better, and very blessed, and that is better yet. I suffer chiefly for Carol's

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sake, but I have almost given up being sorrowful for my own. I am too happy in the child, and I see too clearly what she has done for us and the other children. Donald and Paul and Hugh were three strong, willful, boisterous boys, but now you seldom see such tenderness, devotion, thought for others, and self-denial in lads of their years. A quarrel or a hot word is almost unknown in this house, and why? Carol would hear it, and it would distress her, she is so full of love and goodness. The boys study with all their might and main. Why? Partly, at least, because they like to teach Carol, and amuse her by telling her what they read. When the seamstress comes, she likes to

(Continued on page 5)



Evangelist Eddie Martin preaching to prisoners in an 8-day revival at Kentucky State Penitentiary. This campaign resulted in 76 conversions.

The Birds' Christmas Carol

(Continued from page 4)

sew in Miss Carol's room, because there she forgets her own troubles, which, Heaven knows, are sore enough! And as for me, Donald, I am a better woman every day for Carol's sake; I have to be her eyes, ears, feet, hands—her strength, her hope; and she, my own little child, is my example!

'I was wrong, dear heart,' said Mr. Bird more cheerfully; 'we will try not to repine, but to rejoice instead, that we have an "angel of the house."'

'And as for her future,' Mrs. Bird went on, 'I think we need not be over-anxious. I feel as if she did not belong altogether to us, but that when she has done what God sent her for, He will take her back to Himself—and it may not be very long! Here it was poor Mrs. Bird's turn to break down, and Mr. Bird's turn to comfort her.

III

The Birds' Nest

Carol herself knew nothing of motherly tears and fatherly anxieties; she lived on peacefully in the room where she was born.

But you never would have known that room; for Mr. Bird had a great deal of money, and though he felt sometimes as if he wanted to throw it all in the sea, since it could not buy a strong body for his little girl, yet he was glad to make the place she lived in just as beautiful as it could be.

The room had been extended by the building of a large addition that hung out over the garden below, and was so filled with windows that it might have been a conservatory. The ones on the side were thus still nearer the Church of Our Saviour than they used to be; those in front looked but on the beautiful harbor, and those in the back commanded a view of nothing in particular but a narrow alley; nevertheless, they were pleasantest of all to Carol, for the Ruggles family lived in the alley, and the nine little, middle-sized, and big Ruggles children were a source of inexhaustible interest.

The shutters could all be opened and Carol could take a real sun-bath in this lovely glass house, or they could all be closed when the dear head ached or the dear eyes were tired. The carpet was of soft gray, with clusters of green bay and holly leaves. The furniture was of white wood, on which an artist had painted snow scenes and Christmas trees and groups of merry children ringing bells and singing carols.

Donald had made a pretty, polished shelf, and screwed it on the outside of the foot-board, and the boys always kept this full of blooming plants, which they changed from time to time; the

head-board, too, had a bracket on either side, where there were pots of maiden-hair ferns.

Love-birds and canaries hung in their golden houses in the windows, and they, poor caged things, could hop as far from their wooden perches as Carol could venture from her little white bed.

On one side of the room was a bookcase filled with hundreds—yes, I mean it—with hundreds and hundreds of books; books with gay-colored pictures, books without; books with black and white outline sketches, books with none at all; books with verses, books with stories; books that made children laugh, and some, only a few, that made them cry; books with words of one syllable for tiny boys and girls, and books with words of fearful length to puzzle wise ones.

This was Carol's 'Circulating Library.' Every Saturday she chose ten books, jotting their names down in a diary; into these she slipped cards that said

Please keep this book two weeks and read it.

With love
CAROL BIRD

Then Mrs. Bird stepped into her carriage and took the ten books to the Children's Hospital, and brought home ten others that she had left there the fortnight before.

This was a source of great happiness; for some of the Hospital children that were old enough to print or write, and were strong enough to do it, wrote Carol sweet little letters about the books, and she answered them, and they grew to be friends. (It is very funny, but you do not always have to see people to love them. Just think about it, and tell me if it isn't so.)

Then there was a great closet full of beautiful things to wear, but they were all dressing-gowns and slippers and shawls; and there were drawers full of toys and games, but they were such as you could play with on your lap. There were no nine-pins, nor balls, nor bows and arrows, nor bean bags, nor tennis rackets; but, after all, other children needed these more than Carol Bird, for she was always happy and contented, whatever she had or whatever she lacked; and after the room had been made so lovely for her, on her eighth Christmas, she always called herself, in fun, a 'Bird of Paradise.'

On these particular December days she was happier than usual, for Uncle Jack was coming from England to spend the holidays. Dear, funny, jolly, loving, wise Uncle Jack, who came every two or three years, and brought so much joy with him that the world looked as black as a thunder-cloud for a week after he went away again.

The mail had brought his letter:

London, November 28, 188—
Wish you merry Christmas, you dear, best birdlings in America! Preen your feathers, and stretch the Birds' nest a trifle, if you please, and let Uncle Jack in for the holidays. I am coming with such a trunk full of treasures that you'll have to borrow the stockings of Barnum's Giant and Gantess; I am coming to squeeze a certain little lady-bird until she cries for mercy; I am coming to see if I can find a boy to take care of a black pony that I bought lately. It's the strangest thing I ever knew; I've hunted all over Europe, and can't find a boy to suit me! I'll tell you why. I've set my heart on finding one with a dimple in his chin, because this pony particularly likes dimples! ('Hurrah!' cried Hugh, 'bless my dear dimple; I'll never be ashamed of it again!')

Please drop a note to the clerk of the weather, and have a good, rousing snow-storm—say on the twenty-second. None of your meek, gentle, nonsensical, shilly-shallying snow-storms; not the sort where the flakes float lazily down from the sky as if they didn't care whether they ever got here or not and then melt away as soon as they touch the earth, but a regular business-like whizzing, whirling, blurring, cutting snow-storm, warranted to freeze and stay on!

I should like rather a LARGE Christmas tree, if it's convenient: not one of those 'sprigs,' five or six feet high, that you used to have three or four years ago, when the birdlings were not fairly feathered out; but a tree of some size. Set it up in the garret, if necessary, and then we can cut a hole in the roof if the tree chances to be too high for the room.

Tell Bridget to begin to fatten a turkey. Tell her that by the twentieth of December that turkey must not be able to stand on its legs for fat, and then on the next three days she must allow it to recline easily on its side, and stuff it to bursting. (One ounce of stuffing beforehand is worth a pound afterwards.)

And Carol must decide on the size of the tree—she knows best, she was a Christmas child; and she must plead for the snow-storm—the clerk of the

weather! may pay some attention to her; and she must look up the boy with the dimple for me—she's likelier to find him than I am, this minute. She must advise about the turkey, and Bridget must bring the fruit cake to her bedside and let her drop every separate candied fruit into it and stir it once for luck, or I'll not eat a single slice—for Carol is the dearest part of Christmas to Uncle Jack, and he'll have none of it without her. She is better than all the turkeys and puddings and apples and spare-ribs and wreaths and garlands and mistletoe and stockings and chimneys and sleigh-bells in Christendom! She is the very sweetest Christmas Carol that was ever written, said, sung, or chanted, and I am coming as fast as ships and railway trains can carry me, to tell her so.

Carol's joy knew no bounds. Mr. and Mrs. Bird laughed like children and kissed each other for sheer delight, and when the boys heard it they simply whooped like wild Indians; until the Ruggles family, whose back yard joined their garden, gathered at the door and wondered what was 'up' in the big house.

IV

'Birds of a Feather Flock Together'

Uncle Jack did really come on the twentieth. He was not detained by business, nor did he get left behind nor snowed up, as frequently happens in stories, and in real life too, I am afraid. The snow-storm came also; and the turkey nearly died of a natural and premature death from over-eating. Donald came, too; Donald, with a line of down upon his upper lip, and Greek and Latin on his tongue, and stories of knowledge in his handsome head, and stories—bless me, you couldn't turn over a chip without reminding Donald of something that happened 'at College.' One or the other was always at Carol's bedside, for they fancied her paler than she used to be, and they could not bear her out of sight. It was Uncle Jack, though, who sat beside her in the winter twilights. The room was quiet, and almost dark, save for the snow-light outside, and the flickering flame of the fire, that danced over the 'Sleeping Beauty's' face and touched the Fair One's golden locks with ruddier glory. Carol's hand (all too thin and white these latter days) lay close clasped in Uncle Jack's, and they talked together quietly of many, many things.

I want to tell you all about my plans for Christmas this year, Uncle Jack,' said Carol, on the first evening of his visit, 'because it will be the loveliest one I ever had. The boys laugh at me for caring so much about it; but it isn't altogether because it is Christmas, nor because it is my birthday; but long, long ago, when I first began to be ill, I used to think, the first thing when I waked on Christmas morning, "Today is Christ's birthday—and mine!" I did not put the words close together, you know, because that made it seem too bold; but I first said, "Christ's birthday," out loud, and then, in a minute, softly to myself—"and mine!" "Christ's birthday—and mine!" And so I do not quite feel about Christmas as other girls do. Mamma says she supposes that ever so many other children have been born on that day. I often wonder where they are, Uncle Jack, and whether it is a dear thought to them, too, or whether I am so much in bed, and so often alone, that it means more to me. Oh, I do hope that none of them are poor, or cold, or hungry; and I wish—I wish they were all as happy as I, because they are really my little brothers and sisters. Now, Uncle Jack dear, I am going to try and make somebody happy every single Christmas that I live, and this year it is to be the "Ruggleses in the rear."

That large and interesting brood of children in the little house at the end of the back garden?

'Yes, isn't it nice to see so many together?—and, Uncle Jack, why do the big families always live in the small houses, and the small families in the big houses? We ought to call them the Ruggles children, of course; but Donald began talking of them as the "Ruggleses in the rear," and Papa and Mamma took it up, and now we cannot seem to help it. The house was built for Mr. Carter's yard man, but Mr. Carter lives in Europe, and the gentleman who rents his place for him doesn't care what happens to it, and so this poor family came to live there. When they first moved in, I used to sit in my window

and watch them play in their back yard; they are so strong and jolly, and good-natured;—and then, one day, I had a terrible headache, and Donald asked them if they would please not scream quite so loud, and they explained that they were having a game of circus, but that they would change and play "Deaf and Dumb Assylum" all the afternoon.'

'Ha, ha, ha!' laughed Uncle Jack, 'what an obliging family, to be sure!'

'Yes, we all thought it very funny, and I smiled at them from the window when I was well enough to be up again. Now, Sarah Maud comes to her door when the children come home from school, and if Mamma nods her head, "Yes," that means "Carol is very well," and then you ought to hear the little Ruggleses yell—I believe they try to see how much noise they can make; but if Mamma shakes her head, "No," they always play at quiet games. Then, one day, "Cary," my pet canary, flew out of her cage, and Peter Ruggles caught her and brought her back, and I had him up here in my room to thank him.'

'Is Peter the oldest?'

'No; Sarah Maud is the oldest—she helps do the washing; and Peter is the next. He is a dress-maker's boy.'

'And which is the pretty little red-haired girl?'

'That's Kitty.'

'And the fat youngster?'

'Baby Larry.'

'And that—most freckled one?'

'Now, don't laugh—that's Peoria.'

'Carol, you are joking.'

'No, really, Uncle dear. She was born in Peoria, that's all.'

'And is the next boy Oshkosh?'

'No,' laughed Carol, 'the others are Susan, and Clement, and Eily, and Cornelius; they all look exactly alike, except that some of them have more freckles than the others.'

'How did you ever learn all their names?'

'Why, I have what I call a "window-school." It is too cold now; but in warm weather I am wheeled out on my balcony, and the Ruggleses climb up and walk along our garden fence, and sit down on the roof of our carriage-house. That brings them quite near, and I tell them stories. On Thanksgiving Day they came up for a few minutes—it was quite warm at eleven o'clock—and we told each other what we had to be thankful for; but they gave such queer answers that Papa had to run away for fear of laughing; and I couldn't understand them very well. Susan was thankful for "trunks," of all things in the world; Cornelius, for "horse-cars"; Kitty, for "pork steak"; while Clem, who is very quiet, brightened up when I came to him, and said he was thankful for "his lame puppy." Wasn't that pretty?'

'It might teach some of us a lesson, mightn't it, little girl?'

'That's what Mamma said. Now I'm going to give this whole Christmas to the Ruggleses; and, Uncle Jack, I earned part of the money myself.'

'You, my bird; how?'

'Well, you see, it could not be my own, own Christmas if Papa gave me all the money, and I thought to really keep Christ's birthday I ought to do something of my very own; and so I talked with Mamma. Of course she thought of something lovely; she always does: Mamma's head is just brimming over with lovely thoughts—all I have to do is ask, and out pops the very one I want. This thought was to let her write down just as I told her, a description of how a child lived in her own room for three years, and what she did to amuse herself; and we sent it to a magazine and got twenty-five dollars for it. Just think!'

'Well, well,' cried Uncle Jack, 'my little girl a real author! And what are you going to do with this wonderful "own" money of yours?'

'I shall give the nine Ruggleses a grand Christmas dinner here in this very room—and afterwards a beautiful Christmas tree, fairly blooming with presents. I should like it very much if you would sit at the head of the table, Uncle Jack, for nobody could ever be frightened of you, you dearest, dearest, dearest thing that ever

Hey! You Can Still --

(Continued from page 2)

ligion, getting people saved, bringing revival, saving people from modernism and false cults, than the same amount of money spent anywhere else in the world. It is a burden of soul to me and yet a constant joy. I cannot tell you how my heart thrills at the letters that come daily proving that God's anointing is on THE SWORD OF THE LORD. So, I beg you who read, in Jesus' name, to support the Minister and Missionary Subscription Fund. Several people ought to give very large gifts before the first of the year. Can you send a thousand dollars to this fund? Or a hundred dollars perhaps, or fifty dollars? What you do do only for Jesus' sake.

Remember that this editor gets not a penny of the money that comes for subscriptions, gets no salary from THE SWORD OF THE LORD. I am simply asking you to help in this great missionary work. What you do do for Jesus' sake and expect Him to reward you.

Address your letter to THE SWORD OF THE LORD, Wheaton, Illinois.

was! Mamma is going to help us, but Papa and the boys are going to eat together downstairs for fear of making the little Ruggleses shy; and after we've had a merry time with the tree we can open my window and all listen together to the music at the evening church-service, if it comes before the children go. I have written a letter to the organist, and asked him if I might have the two songs I like best. Will you see if it is all right?'

BIRDS' NEST, December 21, 188—
DEAR MR. WILKIE—I am the little girl who lives next door to the church, and, as I seldom go out, the music on practice days and Sundays is one of my greatest pleasures.

I want to know if you can have 'Carol, brothers, carol,' on Christmas night, and if the boy who sings 'My ain cuntry' so beautifully may please sing that too. I think it is the loveliest thing in the world, but it always makes me cry; doesn't it you?'

If it isn't too much trouble, I hope they can sing them both quite early, as after ten o'clock I may be asleep.

Yours respectfully
CAROL BIRD

P.S.—The reason I like 'Carol, brothers, carol,' is because the choir-boys sang it eleven years ago, the morning I was born, and put it into Mamma's head to call me Carol. She didn't remember then that my other name would be Bird, because she was half asleep, and could only think of one thing at a time. Donald says if I had been born on the Fourth of July they would have named me 'Independence,' or if on the twenty-second of February, 'Georgina,' or even 'Cherry.' I like Cherry in 'Martin Chuzzlewit'; but I like my own name and birthday best.

Yours truly
CAROL BIRD

Uncle Jack thought the letter quite right and did not even smile at her telling the organist so many family items.

The days flew by as they always fly in holiday time, and it was Christmas Eve before anybody knew it. The family festival was quiet and very pleasant, but almost overshadowed by the grander preparations for the next day. Carol and Elfrida her pretty German nurse, had ransacked books, and introduced so many plans, and plays, and customs, and merry-makings from Germany and Holland, and England, and a dozen other countries, that you would scarcely have known how or where you were keeping Christmas. Elfrida had scattered handfuls of seed over the snow in the garden, that the wild birds might have a comfortable breakfast next morning, and had stuffed bundles of dry grasses in the fireplaces, so that the reindeer of Santa Claus could refresh themselves after their long gallops across country. This was

(Continued on page 6)

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The Birds's Christmas Carol

(Continued from page 5)

really only done for fun, but it pleased Carol.

And when, after dinner, the whole family had gone to the church to see the Christmas deco-



rations, Carol, last, and sweetest of all, like the children in Austria, put a lighted candle in her window to guide the dear Christchild, lest he should stumble in the dark night as he passed up the deserted street. This done, she dropped into bed, a rather tired, but very happy Christmas fairy.

V

Some Other Birds Are Taught to Fly

Before the earliest Ruggles could wake and toot his five-cent tin horn, Mrs. Ruggles was up and stirring about the house, for it was a gala day in the family. Gala day! I should think so! Were not her nine 'children' invited to a dinner-party at the great house, and weren't they going to sit down free and equal with the mightiest in the land? She had been preparing for this grand occasion ever since the receipt of Carol Bird's invitation, which, by the way, had been speedily enshrined in an old photograph frame and hung under the looking glass in the most prominent place in the kitchen, where it stared the occasional visitor directly in the eye, and made him livid with envy:

BIRDS' NEST, December 17, 188—. DEAR MRS. RUGGLES—I am going to have a dinner-party on Christmas Day, and would like to have all your children come. I want them every one, please, from Sarah Maud to Baby Larry. Mamma says dinner will be at half past five, and the Christmas tree at seven; so you may expect them home at nine o'clock. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, I am

Yours truly
CAROL BIRD

Breakfast was on the table promptly at seven o'clock, and there was very little of it, too; for it was an excellent day for short rations, though Mrs. Ruggles heaved a sigh as she reflected that the boys, with their India-rubber stomachs, would be just as hungry the day after the dinner-party as if they had never had any at all.

As soon as the scanty meal was over, she announced the plan of the campaign: 'Now, Susan, you an' Kitty wash up the dishes; an' Peter, can't yer spread up the beds, so I can git ter cuttin' out Larry's new suit? I ain't satisfied with his clo'es, an' I thought in the night of a way to make him a dress out o' my old red plaid shawl—kind o' Scotch style, yer know, with the fringe 't the bottom.—Eily, you go find the comb an' take the snarls out the fringe, that's a lady! You little young ones clear out from under foot! Clem, you an' Con hop into bed with Larry while I wash yer under-flannins; 'twon't take long to dry 'em.—Yes, I know its bothersome, but yer can't go int' s'ciety 'thout takin' some trouble, 'n' anyhow I couldn't git round to 'em last night.—Sarah Maud, I think 'twould be perfectly han'som' if you ripped them brass buttons off yer uncle's policeman's coat 'n' sewed 'em in a row up the front o' yer green skirt. Susan, you must iron out yours 'n' Kitty's apurns; 'n' there, I come mighty near forgettin' Peory's stockin's! I counted the whole lot last night when I was washin' of 'em, 'n' there ain't but nineteen anyhow yer fix 'em, 'n' no nine pairs mates now; 'n' I ain't goin' ter have my children wear odd stockin's to a dinner-comp'ny, fetched up as I was!—Eily, can't you run out an' ask Mis' Cullen ter lend me a pair o' stockin's for Peory, 'n' tell her if she will, Peory'll give Jim half her candy

when she gets home. Won't yer, Peory?'

Peoria was young and greedy, and thought the remedy so out of all proportion to the disease, that she set up a deafening howl at the projected bargain—a howl so rebellious and so entirely out of season that her mother started in her direction with flashing eye and uplifted hand; but she let it fall suddenly, saying, 'No, I vow I won't lick ye Christmas Day, if yer drive me crazy; but speak up smart, now, 'n' say whether yer'd rather give Jim Cullen half yer candy or go bare-legged ter the party?' The matter being put so plainly, Peoria collected her faculties, dried her tears, and chose the lesser evil, Clem having hastened the decision by an affectionate wink, that meant he'd go halves with her on his candy.

'That's a lady!' cried her mother. 'Now, you young ones that ain't doin' nothin', play all yer want ter before noontime, for after ye git through eatin' at twelve o'clock me 'n' Sarah Maud's goin' ter give yer sech a washin' 'n' combin' 'n' dressin' as yer never had before 'n' never will ag'in likely, 'n' then I'm goin' to set yer down 'n' give yer two solid hours trainin' in manners; 'n' 'twon't be no foolin' neither.'

'All we've got ter do's go eat!'

grumbled Peter.

'Well, that's enough,' responded his mother; 'there's more'n one way of eatin', let me tell yer, 'n' you've got a heap ter learn about it, Peter Ruggles. Land sakes, I wish you children could see the way I was fetched up to eat. I never took a meal o' vittles in the kitchen before I married Ruggles; but yer can't keep up that style with nine young ones 'n' yer Pa always off ter sea.'

The big Ruggleses worked so well, and the little Ruggleses kept from 'under foot' so successfully, that by one o'clock nine complete toilets were laid out in solemn grandeur on the beds. I say, 'complete'; but I do not know whether they would be called so in the best society. The law of compensation had been well applied: he that had necktie had no cuffs; she that had sash had no handkerchief, and vice versa, but they all had shoes and a certain amount of clothing, such as it was, the outside layer being in every case quite above criticism.

'Now, Sarah Maud,' said Mrs. Ruggles, her face shining with excitement, 'everything's red up an' we can begin. I've got a boiler 'n' a kettle 'n' a pot o' hot water. Peter, you go into the back bedroom, 'n' I'll take Susan, Kitty, Peory, 'n' Cornelius; 'n' Sarah Maud, you take Clem, 'n' Eily, 'n' Larry, one to a time. Scrub 'em 'n' rinse 'em, or 'tany rate, git's fur's yer can with 'em, 'n' then I'll finish 'em off while you do yerself.'

Sarah Maud couldn't have scrubbed with any more decision and force if she had been doing floors, and the little Ruggleses bore it bravely, not from natural heroism, but for the joy that was set before them. Not being satisfied, however, with the 'tone' of their complexions, and feeling that the number of freckles to the square inch was too many to be tolerated in the highest social circles, she wound up operations by applying a little Bristol brick from the knife-board, which served as the proverbial 'last straw,' from under which the little Ruggleses issued rather red and raw and out of temper. When the clock struck four they were all clothed, and most of them in their right minds, ready for those last touches that always take the most time.

Kitty's red hair was curled in thirty-four ringlets, Sarah Maud's was braided in one pig-tail, and Susan's and Eily's in two braids apiece, while Peoria's resisted all advances in the shape of hair oils and stuck out straight on all sides. Then, exciting moment, came linen collars for some and neckties and bows for others—a magnificent green glass breast-pin was sewed into Peter's purple necktie—and Eureka! the Ruggleses were dressed, and Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these!

A row of seats was then formed directly through the middle of the

kitchen. Of course, there were not quite chairs enough for ten, since the family had rarely wanted to sit down all at once, somebody always being out or in bed, or otherwise engaged, but the wood-box and the coal-hod finished out the line nicely, and nobody thought of grumbling. The children took their places according to age, Sarah Maud at the head and Larry on the coal-hod, and Mrs. Ruggles seated herself in front, surveying them proudly as she wiped the sweat of honest toil from her brow.

'Well,' she exclaimed, 'if I do say so as shouldn't, I never see a cleaner, more stylish mess o' children in my life! I do wish Ruggles could look at ye for a minute!'

—Larry Ruggles, how many times have I got ter tell yer not ter keep pullin' at yer sash? Haven't I told yer if it comes ontied, yer waist 'n' skirt'll part comp'ny in the middle, 'n' then where'll yer be?—Now, look me in the eye, all of yer! I've often told yer what kind of a family the McGrills was. I've got reason to be proud, goodness knows! Your uncle is on the police force o' New York City; you can take up the paper most any day an' see his name printed right out James McGill—'n' I can't have my children fetched up common, like some folks'; when they go out they've got to have clo'es, and learn to act decent! Now, I want ter see how yer goin' to behave when yer git there to-night. 'Tain't so awful easy as yer think 'tis. Let's start in at the beginnin' 'n' act out the whole business. Pile into the bedroom, there, every last one o' ye, 'n' show me how yer goin' to go int' the parlor. This'll be the parlor, 'n' I'll be Mis' Bird.'

The youngsters hustled into the next room in high glee, and Mrs. Ruggles drew herself up in the chair with an infinitely haughty and purse-proud expression that much better suited a descendant of the McGrills than modest Mrs. Bird.

The bedroom was small, and there presently ensued such a clatter that you would have thought a herd of wild cattle had broken loose. The door opened, and they straggled in, all the younger ones giggling, with Sarah Maud at the head, looking as if she had been caught in the act of stealing sheep; while Larry, being last in line, seemed to think the door a sort of gate of Heaven which would be shut in his face if he didn't get there in time; accordingly he struggled ahead of his elders and disgraced himself by tumbling in head foremost.

Mrs. Ruggles looked severe. 'There, I knew yer'd do it in some sech fool way! Now, go in there an' try it over ag'in, every one o' ye, 'n' if Larry can't come in on two legs he can stay ter home—d'yer hear?'

The matter began to assume a graver aspect; the little Ruggleses stopped giggling and backed into the bedroom, issuing presently with lock-step, Indian file, a scared and hunted expression on every countenance.

'No, no, no!' cried Mrs. Ruggles, in despair. 'That's worse yet; yer look for all the world like a gang o' pris'ners! There ain't no style ter that: spread out more, can't yer, 'n' act kind o' careless-like—nobody's goin' ter kill ye! That ain't what a dinner-party is!'

The third time brought deserved success, and the pupils took their

seats in the row. 'Now, yer know,' said Mrs. Ruggles impressively, 'there ain't enough decent hats to go round, 'n' if there was I don't know's I'd let yer wear 'em, for the boys would never think to take 'em off when they got inside, for they never do—but, anyhow, there ain't enough good ones. Now, look me in the eye. You're only goin' jest round the corner; you needn't wear no hats, none of yer, 'n' when yer get int' the parlor, 'n' they ask yer ter lay off yer hats, Sarah Maud must speak up 'n' say it was sech a pleasant evenin' 'n' sech a short walk that yer left yer hats to home. Now, can yer remember?'

All the little Ruggleses shouted, 'Yes, marm!' in chorus.

'What have you got ter do with it?' demanded their mother; 'did I tell you to say it? Warn't I talkin' ter Sara Maud?'

The little Ruggleses hung their diminished heads. 'Yes, marm,' they piped, more discreetly.

'Now, we won't leave nothin' to chance; git up all of ye, an' try it.—Speak up, Sarah Maud.'

Sarah Maud's tongue clove to the roof of her mouth.

'Quick!'

'Ma thought—it was—sech a pleasant hat that we'd—we'd better leave our short walk to home,' recited Sarah Maud, in an agony of mental effort.

This was too much for the boys. An earthquake of suppressed giggles swept all along the line.

'Oh, whatever shall I do with yer?' moaned the unhappy mother; 'I s'pose I've got to learn it to yer!—which she did, word for word, until Sarah Maud thought she could stand on her head and say it backwards.

'Now, Cornelius, what are you goin' ter say ter make yerself good comp'ny?'

'Do? Me? Dunno!' said Cornelius, turning pale, with unexpected responsibility.

'Well, ye ain't goin' to set there like a bump on a log 'thout sayin' a word ter pay for yer vittles, air ye? Ask Mis' Bird how she's feelin' this evenin', or if Mr. Bird's hevin' a busy season, or how this kind o' weather agrees with him, or somethin' like that.

—Now, we'll make b'lieve we've got ter the dinner—that won't be so hard, 'cause we'll have somethin' to do—it's awful bothersome to stan' round an' act stylish. —If they have napkins, Sarah Maud down to Peory may put 'em in their laps, 'n' the rest of ye tuck 'em in yer necks. Don't eat with yer fingers—don't grab no vittles off one 'nother's plates; don't reach out for nothin', but wait till yer asked, 'n' if you never git asked don't git up an' grab it. —Don't spill nothin' on the tablecloth, or like's not Mis' Bird'll send yer away from the table—'n' I hope she will if yer do! (Susan! keep yer handkerchief in your lap where Peory can borrow it if she needs it, 'n' I hope she'll know when she does need it, though I don't expect it.) Now, we'll try a few things ter see how they'll go! Mr. Clement, do you eat cramb'ry sarse?'

'Bet yer life!' cried Clem, who in the excitement of the moment had not taken in the idea exactly and had mistaken this for an ordinary bosom-of-the-family question.

'Clement McGill Ruggles, do you mean to tell me that you'd say that to a dinner-party? I'll give ye one more chance, Mr. Clement,

will you take some of the cramb'ry?'

'Yes, marm, thank ye kindly, if you happen ter have any handy.'

'Very good, indeed! But they won't give yer two tries to-night—yer just remember that!—Miss Peory, do you speak for white or dark meat?'

'I ain't perticler as ter color—anything that nobody else wants will suit me,' answered Peory with her best air.

'First-rate! Nobody could speak more genteel than that. Miss Kitty, will you have hard or soft sarse with your fruit cake?'

'Hard or soft? Oh! A little of both, if you please, an' I'm much obliged,' said Kitty, bowing with decided ease and grace; at which all the other Ruggleses pointed the finger of shame at her, and Peter grunted expressively, that their meaning might not be mistaken.

'You just stop your gruntin', Peter Ruggles; that warn't greedy, that was all right. I wish I could git it inter your heads that it ain't so much what yer say, as the way you say it. An' don't keep starin' cross-eyed at your necktie pin, or I'll take it out 'n' sew it on to Clem or Cornelius: Sarah Maud'll keep her eye on it, 'n' if it turns broken side out she'll tell yer. Gracious! I shouldn't think you'd ever seen nor worn no jool'ry in your life.—Eily, you an' Larry's too little to train, so you just look at the rest an' do's they do, 'n' the Lord have mercy on ye 'n' help ye to act decent! Now, is there anything more ye'd like to practice?'

'If yer tell me one more thing, I can't set up an' eat,' said Peter gloomily; 'I'm so cram full o' manners now, I'm ready ter bust, 'thout no dinner at all.'

'Me, too,' chimed in Cornelius.

'Well, I'm sorry for yer both,' rejoined Mrs. Ruggles sarcastically; 'if the 'mount o' manners yer've got on hand now troubles ye, you're dreadful easy hurt! Now, Sarah Maud, after dinner, about once in so often, you must git up 'n' say, "I guess we'd better be goin'," 'n' if they say, "Oh no, set a while longer," yer can set; but if they don't say nothin', you've got ter get up 'n' go.—Now, hev yer got that int' yer head?'

'About once in so often.' Could any words in the language be fraught with more terrible and wearing uncertainty?

'Well,' answered Sarah Maud mournfully, 'seems as if this whole dinner-party set right square on top o' me! Mebbe I could manage my own manners, but to manage nine manners is worse'n stayin' to home!'

'Oh, don't fret,' said her mother, good-naturedly, now that the lesson was over; 'I guess you'll git along. I wouldn't mind if folks would only say, "Oh, children will be children"; but they won't. They'll say, "Land o' Goodness, who fetched them children up?"—It's quarter past five, 'n' yer can go now:—remember 'bout the hats—don't all talk ter once—Susan, lend yer han'k'chief ter Peory—Peter, don't keep screwin' yer scarf-pin—Cornelius, hold yer head up straight—Sarah Maud, don't take yer eyes off o' Larry, 'n' Larry, you keep holt o' Sarah Maud 'n' do jest as she says—'n' whatever you do, all of yer, never forgit for one second that yer mother was a McGill.'

VI

'When the Pie Was Opened the Birds Began to Sing'

The children went out of the back door quietly, and were presently lost to sight, Sarah Maud slipping and stumbling along absent mindedly, as she recited rapidly under her breath, 'Itwassucha pleassantevenin'nsuchashortwalk, that wethoughtw'dleaveourhats-tohome.—Itwassuchapleassantevenin'nsuchashortwalk, that wethoughtw'dleaveourhats-tohome.'

Peter rang the door-bell, and presently a servant admitted them, and, whispering something in Sarah's ear, drew her downstairs into the kitchen. The other Ruggleses stood in horror-stricken groups as the door closed behind their commanding officer; but there was no time for reflection, for a voice from above was heard, saying, 'Come right upstairs, please!'

(Continued on page 7)



The door opened, and they struggled in, all the younger ones giggling, with Sarah Maud at the head, looking as if she had been caught in the act of stealing sheep.

The Birds' Christmas Carol

(Continued from page 6)

*'Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do or die.'*

Accordingly they walked upstairs, and Elfrida, the nurse, ushered them into a room more splendid than anything they had ever seen. But, oh, woe! where was Sarah Maud! and was it Fate that Mrs. Bird should say, at once, 'Did you lay your hats in the hall?' Peter felt himself elected by circumstance the head of the family, and, casting one imploring look at tongue-tied Susan, standing next him, said huskily, 'It was so very pleasant—that—that—' 'That we hadn't good hats enough to go 'round,' put in little Susan, bravely, to help him out, and then froze with horror that the ill-fated words had slipped off her tongue.

However, Mrs. Bird said, pleasantly, 'Of course you wouldn't wear hats such a short distance—I forgot when I asked. Now, will you come right in to Carol's room?' She is so anxious to see you.

Just then Sarah Maud came up the back stairs, so radiant with joy from her secret interview with the cook that Peter could have pinched her with a clear conscience; and Carol gave them a joyful welcome. 'But where is Baby Larry?' she cried, looking over the group with searching eye. 'Didn't he come?'

'Larry! Larry!' Good gracious, where was Larry? They were all sure that he had come in with them, for Susan remembered scolding him for tripping over the door mat. Uncle Jack went into convulsions of laughter. 'Are you sure there were nine of you?' he asked, merrily.

'I think so, sir,' said Peoria timidly; 'but anyhow, where was Larry.' And she showed signs of weeping.

'Oh, well, cheer up!' cried Uncle Jack. 'Probably he's not lost—only mislaid. I'll go and find him before you can say Jack Robinson!'

'I'll go, too, if you please, sir,' said Sarah Maud, 'for it was my place to mind him, an' if he's lost I can't relish my vittles!'

The other Ruggleses stood rooted to the floor. Was this a dinner-party, forsooth; and if so, why were such things ever spoken of as festive occasions?

Sarah Maud went out through the hall, calling, 'Larry! Larry!' and without any interval of suspense a thin voice piped up from below, 'Here I be!'

The truth was that Larry, being deserted by his natural guardian, dropped behind the rest, and wriggled into the hat-tree to wait for her, having no notion of walking unprotected into the jaws of a fashionable entertainment. Finding that she did not come, he tried to crawl from his refuge and call somebody, when—dark and dreadful ending to a tragic day—he found that he was too much intertwined with umbrellas and canes to move a single step. He was afraid to yell (when I have said this of Larry Ruggles I have pictured a state of helpless terror that ought to wring tears from every eye); and the sound of Sarah Maud's beloved voice, some seconds later, was like a strain of angel music in his ears. Uncle Jack dried his tears, carried him upstairs, and soon had him in breathless fits of laughter, while Carol so made the other Ruggleses forget themselves that they were presently talking like accomplished diners-out.

Carol's bed had been moved into the farthest corner of the room, and she was lying on the outside, dressed in a wonderful dressing-gown that looked like a fleecy cloud. Her golden hair fell in fluffy curls over her white forehead and neck, her cheeks flushed delicately, her eyes beamed with joy, and the children told their mother, afterwards, that she looked as beautiful as the angels in the picture books.

There was a great bustle behind a huge screen in another part of the room, and at half past five this was taken away, and the Christmas dinner-table stood revealed. What a wonderful sight it was to the poor little Ruggles children, who ate their sometimes

scanty meals on the kitchen table! It blazed with tall colored candles, it gleamed with glass and silver, it blushed with flowers, it groaned with good things to eat; so it was not strange that the Ruggleses, forgetting altogether that their mother was a McGrill, shrieked in admiration of the fairy spectacle. But Larry's behavior was the most disgraceful, for he stood not upon the order of his going, but went at once for a high chair that pointed unmistakably to him, climbed up like a squirrel, gave a comprehensive look at the turkey, clapped his hands in ecstasy, rested his fat arms on the table, and cried with joy, 'I beat the hull lot o' yer!' Carol laughed until she cried, giving orders, meanwhile—'Uncle Jack, please sit at the head, Sarah Maud at the foot, and that will leave four on each side; Mamma is going to help Elfrida, so that the children need not look after each other, but just have a good time.'

A sprig of holly lay by each plate, and nothing would do but each little Ruggles must leave his seat and have it pinned on by Carol, and as each course was served, one of them pleaded to take something to her. There was hurrying to and fro, I can assure you, for it is quite a difficult matter to serve a Christmas dinner on the third floor of a great city house; but if it had been necessary to carry every dish up a rope ladder the servants would gladly have done so. There were turkey and chicken, with delicious gravy and stuffing, and there were half a dozen vegetables, with cranberry jelly, and celery, and pickles; and as for the way these delicacies were served, the Ruggleses never forgot it as long as they lived.

Peter nudged Kitty, who sat next to him, and said, 'Look, will yer, ev'ry feller's got his own partic'lar butter; I s'pose that's to show you can eat that 'n' no more. No, it ain't either, for that pig of a Peory's just gettin' another helpin'!

'Yes,' whispered Kitty, 'an' the napkins is marked with big red letters! I wonder if that's so nobody'll nip 'em; an' oh, Peter, look at the pictures stickin' right on ter the dishes! Did yer ever?'

'The plums is all took out o' my cramb'ry sarse an' it's friz to a stiff jell!' whispered Peoria, in wild excitement.

'Hi-yah! I got a wish-bone!' sang Larry, regardless of Sarah Maud's frown; after which she asked to have his seat changed, giving as excuse that he 'gen'ally set beside her, an' would feel strange'; the true reason being that she desired to kick him gently, under the table, whenever he passed what might be termed 'the McGrill line.'

'I declare to goodness,' murmured Susan, on the other side, 'there's so much to look at I can't scarcely eat nothin'!'

'Bet yer life I can!' said Peter, who had kept one servant busily employed ever since he sat down; for, luckily, no one was asked by Uncle Jack whether he would have a second helping, but the dishes were quietly passed under their noses, and not a single Ruggles refused anything that was offered him, even unto the seventh time.

Then, when Carol and Uncle Jack perceived that more turkey was a physical impossibility, the meats were taken off and the dessert was brought in—a dessert that would have frightened a strong man after such a dinner as had preceded it. Not so the Ruggleses—for a strong man is nothing to a small boy—and they kindled to the dessert as if the turkey had been a dream and the six vegetables an optical delusion. There were fruit cakes, mince-pie, and ice cream; and there were nuts, and raisins, and oranges. Kitty chose ice cream, explaining that she knew it 'by sight, though she hadn't never tasted none'; but all the rest took the entire variety, without any regard to consequences.

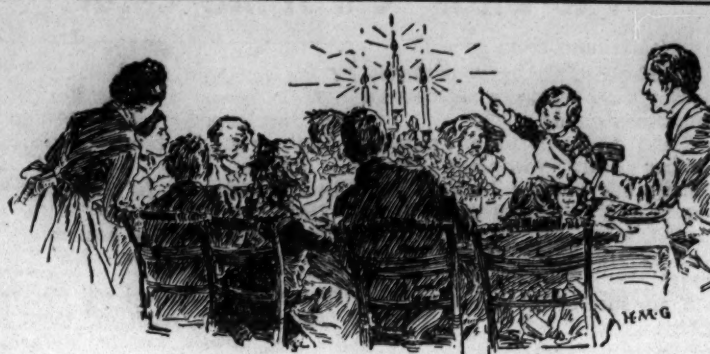
'My dear child,' whispered Uncle Jack, as he took Carol an orange, 'there is no doubt about the necessity of this feast; but I do advise you after this to have them twice a year, or quarterly perhaps, for the way these children eat is posi-

tively dangerous; I assure you I tremble for that terrible Peoria. I'm going to run races with her after dinner.

'Never mind,' laughed Carol; 'let them have enough for once; it does my heart good to see them, and they shall come oftener next year.'

The feast being over, the Ruggleses lay back in the chairs languidly, like little gorged boa constrictors, and the table was cleared in a trice. Then a door was opened into the next room, and there, in a corner facing Carol's bed, which had been wheeled as close as possible, stood the brilliantly lighted Christmas tree, glittering with gilded walnuts and tiny silver balloons, and wreathed with snowy chains of pop-corn. The presents had been bought mostly with Carol's story-money, and were selected after long consultations with Mrs. Bird. Each girl had a blue knitted hood, and each boy a red crocheted comforter, all made by Mamma, Carol, and Elfrida. ('Because if you buy everything, it doesn't show so much love,' said Carol.) Then every girl had a pretty plaid dress of a different color, and every boy a warm coat of the right size. Here the useful presents stopped, and they were quite enough; but Carol had pleaded to give them something 'for fun.'

So Carol had her way, as she generally did; but it was usually a good way, which was fortunate, under the circumstances; and Sarah Maud had a set of Miss Alcott's books, and Peter a modest silver watch, Cornelius a tool-chest, Clement a dog-house for his lame puppy, Larry a magnificent Noah's ark, and each of the younger girls a beautiful doll.



"Hi-yah! I got a wish-bone!" sang Larry . . .

You can well believe that everybody was very merry and very thankful. All the family, from Mr. Bird down to the cook, said that they had never seen so much happiness in the space of three hours; but it had to end, as all things do. The candles flickered and went out, the tree was left alone with its gilded ornaments, and Mrs. Bird sent the children downstairs at half past eight, thinking that Carol looked tired.

'Now, my darling, you have done quite enough for one day,' said Mrs. Bird, getting Carol into her little nightgown. 'I'm afraid you will feel worse to-morrow, and that would be a sad ending to such a charming evening.'

'Oh, wasn't it a lovely, lovely time,' sighed Carol. 'From first to last, everything was just right. I shall never forget Larry's face when he looked at the turkey; nor Peter's when he saw his watch; nor the sweet, sweet Kitty's smile when she kissed her dolly; nor the tears in poor, dull Sarah Maud's eyes when she thanked me for her books; nor—'

'But we musn't talk any longer about it to-night,' said Mrs. Bird,

anxiously; 'you are too tired, dear.' I am not so very tired, Mamma. I have felt well all day; not a bit of pain anywhere. Perhaps this has done me good.'

'Perhaps; I hope so. There was no noise or confusion; it was just a merry time. Now, may I close the door and leave you alone, dear? Papa and I will steal in softly by and by to see if you are all right; but I think you need to be very quiet.'

'Oh, I'm willing to stay by myself; but I am not sleepy yet, and I am going to hear the music you know.'

'Yes, I have opened the window a little, and put the screen in front of it, so that you won't feel the air.'

'Can I have the shutters open? and won't you turn my bed, please? This morning I woke ever so early, and one bright, beautiful star shone in that eastern window. I never noticed it before, and I thought of the Star of the East, that guided the wise men to the place where the baby Jesus was. Good-night, Mamma. Such a happy, happy day!'

(Continued on page 8)

HOW TALL HAVE YOU GROWN?

Back at the old home, there's a certain door frame, marked with smudged penciled lines, each carefully dated. There each child, on his birthday, was measured carefully, to see how much he had grown during the year. Though the children are gone now, the faint smudges remind of the days of youthful, joyful growth.

Suppose we, facing a new year, stand against an imaginary door frame, and measure our spiritual growth of the past year. Have we conquered some of the sins we vowed we would conquer? Is the Word of God sweet and precious, partaken of daily? Is there really victory over a particular sin? Have some of our friends trusted Christ because of our testimony? Is the home life honoring to Christ? Are the children obedient and thoughtful? Could we say we are satisfied with our spiritual growth? Most of us must honestly confess there are many ways we failed God in 1954.

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The Birds' Christmas Carol

(Continued from page 7)

'Good-night, my precious Christmas Carol—mother's blessed Christmas child.'

'Bend your head a minute, mother dear,' whispered Carol, calling her mother back. 'Mamma, dear, I do think that we have kept Christ's birthday this time just as He would like it. Don't you?'

'I am sure of it,' said Mrs. Bird softly.

VII

The Birdling Flies Away

The Ruggleses had finished a last romp in the library with Paul and Hugh, and Uncle Jack had taken them home and stayed a while to chat with Mrs. Ruggles, who opened the door for them, her face all aglow with excitement and delight. When Kitty and Clem showed her the oranges and nuts that they had kept for her, she astonished them by saying that at six o'clock Mrs. Bird had sent her in the finest dinner she had ever seen in her life; and not only that, but a piece of dress-goods that must have cost a dollar a yard if it cost a cent.

As Uncle Jack went down the rickety steps he looked back into the window for a last glimpse of the family, as the children gathered about their mother, showing their beautiful presents again and again—and then upward to a window in the great house yonder. 'A little child shall lead them,' he thought. 'Well, if—anything ever happens to Carol, I will take the Ruggleses under my wing.'

'Softly, Uncle Jack,' whispered the boys, as he walked into the library a while later. 'We are listening to the music in the church. The choir has sung "Carol, brothers, carol," and now we think the organist is beginning to play "My ain countree" for Carol.'

'I hope she hears it,' said Mrs. Bird; 'but they are very late to-night, and I dare not speak to her lest she should be asleep. It is almost ten o'clock.'

The boy soprano, clad in white surplice, stood in the organ loft. The light shone full upon his crown of fair hair, and his pale face, with its serious blue eyes, looked paler than usual. Perhaps it was something in the tender thrill of the voice, or in the sweet words, but there were tears in many eyes, both in the church and in the great house next door.

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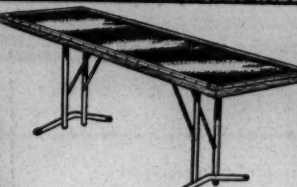
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*'I am far frae my hame,
I am weary aften whiles
For the lunged-for hame-bringin',
An' my Faether's welcome
smiles;
An' I'll ne'er be fu' content,
Until my e'en do see
The gowden gates o' heaven
In my ain countree.*

*'The earth is decked wi' flow'rs,
Mony tinted, fresh an' gay,
An' the birdies warble blythely,
For my Faether made them sae;
But these sights an' these soun's
Will as naething be to me,
When I hear the angels singin'
In my ain countree.*

*'Like a bairn to its mither,
A wee birdie to its nest,
I fain would be gangin' noo
Unto my Faether's breast;
For He gathers in His arms
Helpless, worthless lambs like
me,
An' carries them Himself
To his ain countree.'*

There were tears in many eyes, but not in Carol's. The loving heart had quietly ceased to beat, and the 'wee birdie' in the great house had flown to its 'home nest.' Carol had fallen asleep! But as to the song, I think perhaps, I can not say, she heard it after all!

So sad an ending to a happy day! Perhaps—to those who were left; and yet Carol's mother, even in the freshness of her grief, was

glad that her darling had slipped away on the loveliest day of her life, out of its glad content, into everlasting peace.

She was glad that she had gone as she had come, on the wings of song, when all the world was brimming over with joy; glad of every grateful smile, of every joyous burst of laughter, of every loving thought and word and deed the dear last day had brought.

Sadness reigned, it is true, in the little house behind the garden; and one day poor Sarah Maud, with a courage born of despair, threw on her hood and shawl, walked straight to a certain house a mile away, up the marble steps into good Dr. Bartol's office, falling at his feet as she cried, 'Oh, sir, it was me an' our children that went to Miss Carol's last dinner-party, an' if we made her worse we can't never be happy again!' Then the kind old gentleman took her rough hand in his and told her to dry her tears, for neither she nor any of her flock had hastened Carol's flight; indeed, he said that had it not been for the strong hopes and wishes that filled her tired heart, she could not have stayed long enough to keep that last merry Christmas with her dear ones.

And so the old years, fraught with memories, die, one after another, and the new years, bright with hopes, are born to take their places; but Carol lives again in every chime of Christmas bells that peal glad tidings, and in every Christmas anthem sung by childish voices.

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The Meaning of Christmas

(Continued from page 2)

initiative. The candle did not reach forth to the sun; the sun stooped to the candle. The glowworm did not reach up to the stars; the star stooped to touch the glowworm. Humanity did not seek God; God sought humanity. "He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all" (John 3:31).

He who is from heaven and is above all is heaven's bread for earth's hunger, heaven's light for earth's darkness, heaven's grace for earth's guilt, heaven's life for earth's death.

And during the days of His flesh on earth this Christ never lifted a finger, never took a step, never breathed a word to injure any. He welcomed to His love the most neglected of the outcast, the poorest of the poor, the saddest of the sad, the vilest of the vile—inviting them to His holy and happy home in heaven.

But—'tis said 'tis true—Christmas means a—

VII. Marring

I mean by "marring" that men mar the beauty of Christmas by riotous living rather than by reverence of the holy realities which the Christmas season brings to mind. Instead of worship, wickedness—instead of prayer, perversity—instead of devotion, drunkenness—instead of spiritual delight, carnal dancing—instead of expressions of gratitude, utterances of profane and vulgar thoughts—instead of peace, Mars tying crepe to many doorknobs—instead of consecration, carnality and love, by hellish alchemy, changed into lust—instead of hands handling the Bible, hands holding booze bottles—instead of gratitude, greed and grab and get. As incongruous as chunks of ice for pillows, as rattlesnakes on playgrounds, are many things we see and hear at Christmas time. How many things people do and rejoice in at Christmas season are as man's mean paint on God's fair lilies, as the stupidity of vandals in an art gallery.

Yes, poor understanding have many of the meaning of Christmas. At Christmas time we should remember that "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, godly in this present world" (Titus 2).

Last of all, I say that Christmas means the—

VIII. Master

This Christ whom the disciples

called Master is He who, in eternity, rested on the bosom of the Father without a mother and in time rested on the bosom of a mother without a father—Son of man and Son of God, just as old as His Heavenly Father and ages older than His earthly mother. He who was in the manger later mastered disease into health, blindness into sight, deafness into hearing, lameness into suppleness and strength of muscles, leprosy into cleanness, storms into calm, scarcity of bread into food plenteous, dumbness into speech, death into life, and grace into resurrection glory.

He mastered sin, Satan, suffering, death, the grave, and hell. And through him we can be more than conquerors—mastering all things that mar proper observance of Christmas, mastering the mind so that it thinks God's thoughts after Him, mastering Satan by resistance until he flees from us, mastering our bodies until we shall be "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal bodies"—to the glory of Him who "being in the form of God . . . made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form of a servant . . . and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

At this Christmas season, every heart ought to say, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (II Corinthians 9:15). You did not ask God for this gift; it was freely bestowed.

At this Christmas season, will you receive presents from earthly friends and reject the Gift of gifts from God? Base ingratitude! You can commit no greater sin than that of rejecting Jesus Christ. Everything you ever did fades into insignificance in the face of your refusal of the gift of God. Confess your utter worthlessness and simply accept the Lord Jesus Christ, God's "unspeakable gift."

At this Christmas season, we may not bying Him as costly a present as the Magi brought, but we can bring to His feet and cradle the frankincense of our joy, the pearls of our tears, the kiss of our love, the prostration of our worship, move someone to faith in Him—and give testimony that Jesus, our Saviour, our Lord, is Son of man without sin, Son of God with power and glory, whose name is ceaseless music at the throne which overlooks the world.

(From the book, THE SINNER'S SAVIOUR. Used by permission of Broadman Press, Publishers.)

No Room in the Inn!

(Continued from page 1)

England for Christ when I was there. Not only is there no room for Him in nations, but sides nor parties do not want Him. The commercial men don't want Him. I tell you your ledgers would be kept very differently if Christianity had anything to do with commerce. Your court house would be differently administered. I guess some of you lawyers would find your occupations gone. There is not a single profession I know of that wants Jesus Christ.

I've an idea that none of your secret societies want Him. Your fashionable people, what is called the upper ten, would not bear His presence. Why, if you were to talk of Christ at a fashionable evening party they'd think you were crazy.

The theaters don't want Him. If Christ ruled on earth, the theaters would have to shut their doors.

The Democrats don't want Him. Neither do the Republicans. Let any man get up in Congress and say the Lord says so-and-so and they would ignore him at once.

There are a good many churches that do not want Him. I believe that Christ is knocking at the doors of a good many churches, and they won't let Him in. If Christ were to be admitted into the church the formalists would be swept out of existence. There would be none of this half-heartedness then. There are churches that would want to crucify Christ at once if He were here again. They are like that inn at Bethlehem which had no room for Him. Did you ever have that feeling in your heart that nobody wanted you—that nobody cared for you? It's something terrible. I remember as a boy going from store to store in Boston looking for work, and nobody wanted me; there was no room anywhere for me. It was the awfulest feeling I ever experienced. What must have been the feelings of the Son of God when He came into this world to save it, and was rejected on every hand? There was no room for Him anywhere at all.

In the last of the seventh chapter of John and the first of the eighth, which never ought to have been separated, we read one of the saddest things in all Scripture: "Every man went unto his own house. Jesus went unto the mount of Olives." He had been telling this people sweet and consoling truths; He had talked so high that they did not understand Him and even some of His disciples turned away from Him. Every man went unto his own house, but Christ had no house. He was a stranger among them, and He was left to go up the mountain alone. The foxes had holes and the birds had nests, but the Son of Man had not a place on which to rest His head.

If we had been living in Galilee in those days, probably we would have shut out Christ just like the Jews. Oh, let us not do it now! Thank God, we can make room for Him if we only will.

Isn't it strange that Christ had nothing of His own down here. Everything was borrowed. The manger that served as a cradle for Him was a borrowed one. The beast that He rode on to Jerusalem was borrowed. The room that He held the last supper in the night before He died was lent for that occasion. Christ was a borrower from the cradle to the cross, but how well He paid humanity back!

We read in one place that He looked up to Heaven and sighed. He was thinking no doubt that so few understood Him, and that the world despised Him.

But in all the gloom there is one bright star that shines out radiantly. I can imagine one afternoon Christ stood in the outer court of the temple—for He was never admitted into the inner court; they never allowed Him in the place where the priests were, although it was His own temple—and a woman came in to worship. She saw the crowd, made inquiries as to who the speaker was, and was told that He was the prophet of Galilee.

She said, "I have heard a great deal of that prophet, but I never heard any good about Him. I am told He is a deceiver and an impostor. I think I will go and hear Him myself."

I can see that woman. She gets just as near to the speaker as she can, and stands there listening. That afternoon Christ, perhaps, uttered something like this: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

"Ah," said that woman, "that is what I want. I have sought rest and have never been able to find it. I have sought it in the prophets, I have sought it here in the temple service; but my heart is so sad and lonely. Mother is gone, Father is dead, and I want comfort. That man speaks of giving comfort; I never heard anything like that before."

It may be that her prejudice and unbelief began to wear away, and she said: "I have a good mind to ask Him out to my home. But," she says, "if I do, Mary my sister, will be very angry. Lazarus doesn't believe in Him; he will be angry if I should ask Him. And then I will lose so many of my old friends."

Perhaps the greatest struggle of her life went on there for fifteen or twenty minutes, but when He got through teaching, and the crowd began to disperse, she said, "I will ask Him."

She went and asked Him out to Bethany. Now listen: Christ has never refused an invitation during all these nineteen hundred years. I don't care how dark the home is; it may be the home of the vilest drunkard; it may be as dark as midnight; but ask Him to your home, and see how quickly He will accept the invitation. When Martha asked Him out to Bethany, He accepted the invitation.

Little did Martha know what need she would have for the Saviour by and by. Little did she know the cloud that was about to burst upon her house. Her brother Lazarus was taken ill, and to Jesus the sisters sent word, "He whom thou lovest is sick." They did not ask Him to come. They knew that would be enough.

It took Christ a whole day to get there. While He was coming, the sisters were watching and sorrowing. Lazarus had died. Some of you no doubt know what it is to be watching by the dead, awaiting some friend to whom you can pour out your sorrow. When He arrived, He went with the sisters to the tomb. They rolled back the stone, and at the Saviour's call Lazarus walked forth from the dead.

My dear friends, I want to ask you a question: Wasn't it the best day's work that Martha ever did when she received Christ into her home, when she made room in her heart for Him? Can you do a better thing while you are on earth than to make room for the Son of God? He has gone up on high to make room for every one that will believe on Him. John caught sight of the eternal city. He gives us a description of the home Christ has gone to prepare:

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Oh, I want a Christ that will call me back from the grave on the eternal resurrection day! I want the stone rolled away. It is only a question of time. The breaking of the cloud of sorrow is coming to us all. The day is coming when Christ will be more to us than all the world. He's the Comforter and Deliverer.

When God made the world, He made plenty of room for you and me. When God made our hearts He left room in them for Jesus Christ. He it is who has gone to make room for us in Heaven. If we receive Him down here, He will receive us up there. Unlock that heart. Pull back the bolt. Admit Jesus Christ to your very soul.

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